R9375-1

Research News for the U.S. Travel Industry

★ ★ ★

TRAVEL PRINTOUT

US Travel Data Center

May 1991 Volume 20, Number 5

Summer Vacations to be Altered

Americans are expected to travel at the same record level recorded last summer, but their vacations will be shorter in duration, involve more stays with friends and relatives and have a stronger emphasis on automobile travel, predicted the U.S. Travel Data Center at a joint news conference with the American Automobile Association on May 21 in Atlanta.

"Americans still want to take their vacation trips this summer despite the current economic conditions," explained Suzanne Cook, executive director of the Data Center, at the Carter Presidential Center. "They will just be altering the characteristics of these trips to fit their current economic situation."

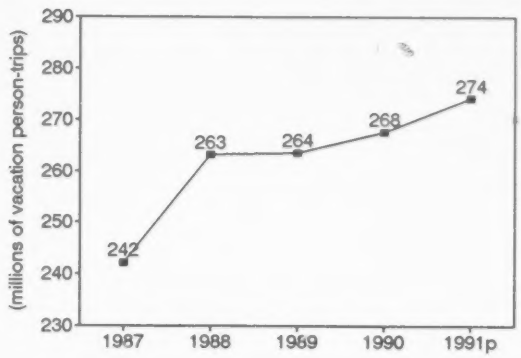
According to the Data Center's *1991 Summer Vacation Travel Forecast*, summer vacation travel in 1991 should be flat or show modest growth as compared to summer 1990, but will at least reach the 326 million vacation person-trips recorded last summer. (A person-trip is one person traveling 100 miles or more away from home).

Vacationers will be taking to the road more than ever this summer. Auto travel will increase its share to 84 percent of all 1991 summer vacation travel, up from 82 percent last summer.

Travel by car, truck and RV is expected to increase 2 percent, up to 274 million person-trips this summer, compared to 268 million in summer 1990.

Summer vacation travelers will be taking shorter trips closer to home and will visit friends and relatives more this summer, according the Data Center. In fact, the duration of an overnight summer vacation trip will drop from 5.1 nights in summer 1990 to 4.9 nights this summer and trips of 1-3 nights will be more popular than ever. Visiting friends and relatives will account for 42 percent of all vacation person-trips this summer.

Summer Vacation Travel by Automobile
Up 13 Percent Since 1987



p=projected

Source: U.S. Travel Data Center

Other highlights from the Summer Forecast include:

- July will be the most popular month for summer travel, with 120 million person-trips.
- Despite rising travel prices in the first quarter of 1991, 56 percent of vacation planners are budgeting the same amount for vacation travel this summer as last summer.
- Consumer studies have indicated that safety concerns have generally subsided and the recession is now the dominant threat to the industry.
- After plummeting last year, the percent of consumers who perceive travel-related goods and services as bargains for summer 1991 compared to summer 1990 has increased.
- Trips of one to three nights will account for more than half of all vacation travel this summer.
- Ocean/beaches (30 percent) are by far the most popular intended type of destination for summer 1991. In addition, the gap between visiting cities and ocean/beaches has widened, compared to last year.
- The Southeast will remain as the most popular vacation destination region this summer, attracting 29 percent of all vacation travel.

(See more summer projections on page 3.)

Airline Fares, Lodging Costs Leads to Travel Price Decrease

The cost of travel in the United States decreased in April for the first time since September 1990, dropping 1.5 percent below the previous month. The decrease was largely due to the 6 percent drop in airline fares and more than 3 percent decrease in lodging prices, according to the Data Center's latest Travel Price Index (TPI).

The TPI, which measures seasonally unadjusted changes in the cost of travel in the U.S. decreased to 144.0 (1982 - 84 = 100) during April.

For comparison, the overall cost of goods and services Americans purchased as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased 0.1 percent in April and rose to 135.2.

Travel Price Index and Components

April 1991 TPI Component	Monthly % Change Mar. 1991 to Apr. 1991	Annual % Change Apr. 1990 to Apr. 1991
Transportation	-1.6	5.2
Airline Fares	-6.2	5.2
Other Intercity Trans.	-0.1	3.4
Intracity Public Trans.	0.4	4.3
Motor Fuel	1.6	5.4
Lodging	-3.5	17.5
Food and Beverages Away From Home	0.4	3.7
Entertainment	1.5	5.1
TRAVEL PRICE INDEX	-1.5	8.2
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	0.1	4.9

Source: U.S. Travel Data Center and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

The 6.2 percent monthly decrease in airline fares this past April was the largest decrease in airline fares since June 1984. Even though airline fares decreased in April, they were up more than 5 percent as compared to 12 months before.

Overall transportation costs decreased for the fourth consecutive month, dropping 1.6 percent in April. But over the last 12 months, transportation prices have increased more than 5 percent. Lodging prices showed a monthly decrease of 3.5 percent in April, but also showed a substantial increase over the past 12 months.

Motor fuel showed an increase of 1.6 percent, while intracity public transportation, and food and beverages away from home showed slight increases. In addition, entertainment prices increased 1.5 percent in April.

Over the past 12 months, the TPI increased 8.2 percent, influenced greatly by rising lodging and transportation costs. The CPI rose nearly 5 percent over the same 12 month period.

The TPI indicates price changes in travel goods and services available to consumers in the U.S., based on Consumer Price Index data, and does *not* necessarily represent changes in the average fares, rates and other costs that travelers actually paid.

Japanese Overseas Travel Continues to Increase

Nearly 11 million Japanese traveled overseas in 1990, an increase of 122 percent since 1985, according to the Marketing Intelligence Corporation's *Japanese Overseas Travelers' Index (JOTI).*

Twenty-two percent of all Japanese travelers went to Eastern Asia in 1990, 18 percent traveled to Europe/USSR and 8 percent traveled to the United States.

Traveling in a tour booked through a travel agent was the most frequently used method of travel among Japanese traveling overseas. Fifty percent traveled on a tour in 1990, whereas 43 percent traveled independently.

Shopping was the most popular activity for Japanese travelers. Athletics, visiting tourist spots and museums were also popular activities for the Japanese. In fact, tourist spots and athletics have both shown consistent increases in popularity since 1987.

The 1990 survey was conducted among 9,000 Japanese travelers having just returned home from overseas. *JOTI* was established in 1987 and is subscribed to by a number of major organizations around the World. For additional information contact Bill Lewellen at (314) 827-2325.

TRAVEL PRINTOUT is published monthly by the U.S. Travel Data Center, the national non-profit center for travel and tourism research and an affiliate of the Travel Industry Association of America, Two Lafayette Centre, 1133 21st Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20036. (202) 293-1040.

Dr. Suzanne D. Cook, Executive Director
Scott M. Dring, Editor

TRAVEL PRINTOUT reports on Data Center projects, national travel research conducted by other organizations and trends in the U.S. Travel Industry. Subscriptions are $75 per year; Foreign countries, $80 per year, payable in U.S. funds. ISSN: 0744-6233.

(Continued from page 1)

- The West will continue to be the second most popular destination, attracting 20 percent of all vacation travel.
- According to Smith Travel Research, the summer will be sluggish for the hotel industry with occupancy rates dipping below last summer's level. Hotel demand will also be down from last summer.
- More than half (54 percent) of summer 1990 vacation planners say they will visit the same destination this summer, compared to just 43 percent last year.
- Supporting the trend toward shorter trips, a much higher percentage of consumers said they took a mix of long and short trips in summer 1990 than has been reported in previous summers.
- Being together as a family, getting away from the daily work routine and finding rest and relaxation are the top three reasons for Americans to take a summer vacation trip.
- U.S. outbound international travel is expected to recover by summer 1991. The European Travel Commission predicts that the number of U.S. travelers to Europe will approach last summers' volume despite first quarter slumps in international air travel.

For additional information, contact the Data Center at (202) 293-1040. *The 1991 Summer Vacation Travel Forecast* is available for $25. (Data Center full members will be receiving a complimentary copy and basic members may purchase the forecast for $20.)

Visitor Volume at National Parks

Region	MAR 1991 visits	% Change from MAR 1990	Year to Date % Change 1991/90*
NEW ENGLAND	418,342	-5.0%	3.3%
MIDDLE ATLANTIC	1,491,420	8.7	2.1
SOUTH ATLANTIC	5,001,053	-0.3	-1.4
EAST SOUTH CENT.	1,284,731	0.5	0.2
EAST NORTH CENT.	274,534	4.9	11.8
WEST NORTH CENT.	436,347	11.6	5.2
WEST SOUTH CENT.	775,943	-1.3	-8.9
MOUNTAIN	2,027,912	-11.3	-1.3
PACIFIC	2,965,790	-3.3	2.9
TOTAL	14,676,072	-1.5	0.2

* Percent change figures may not be consistent with those previously reported due to National Park Service revisions.

Census regions: New England: Conn., Maine, Mass., N.H., R.I., Vermont. Middle Atlantic: N.J., N.Y., Penn. S. Atlantic: Del., District of Columbia, Fla., Ga., Md., N.C., S.C., Va., W.Va. East South Central: Ala., Ky., Miss., Tenn. East North Central: Ill., Ind., Mich., Ohio, Wis. West North Central: Iowa, Kan., Minn., Mo., Neb., N.D., S.D. West South Central: Ark., La., Okla., Texas. Mountain: Ariz., Colo., Idaho, Mont., Nev., N.M., Utah, Wyo. Pacific: Alaska, Calif., Hawaii, Ore., Wash.

Discoveries...

International Visitors to Increase Spending

The United States Travel and Tourism Administration (USTTA) recently released projections that indicate that the U.S. will receive $56.9 billion in international travel receipts from an estimated 41.5 million visitors in 1991, a 7 percent increase over the previous year.

"This year should set a new record for international inbound travel to the United States," said Harvey Shields, USTTA research director.

Canada is projected to show the largest increase of arrivals to the U.S., jumping 9 percent to more than 18.8 million visitors in 1991.

Of the more than 15 million overseas visitors projected to arrive to the U.S. in 1991, Europe will provide the greatest number of visitors. More than 6.8 million Europeans will travel to the U.S. in 1991, an increase of 4 percent.

South America and Oceania are projected to show the largest increases in arrivals to the U.S. in 1991, jumping 8 percent and 7 percent, respectively.

There were a total of 38.8 million visitors to the U.S. in 1990, spending more than $51.1 billion on tourism goods and services.

On the other hand, Americans traveling abroad in 1990 spent $47.9 billion giving the United States a record travel account surplus of $3.2 billion, compared to a surplus of $1 billion in 1989.

The USTTA also estimated that 4.8 million overseas visitors traveled to California in 1990 and 4.5 million visited New York. Florida, Hawaii and Nevada rounded out the top five destinations.

In addition, several states showed substantial increases in overseas arrivals since 1985. In fact, overseas arrivals to Kansas increased 213 percent since 1985.

This type of information is contained in USTTA *Updates and Information Alerts* quarterly mailings, which can be purchased through the Data Center for an annual subscription rate of $50. For additional information, contact the Data Center at (202) 293-1040.

Current Travel Indicators - 1990/91

	Month	Value	Units	Percent Change Last Month	Year Ago	Year To Date
Establishment Receipts or Retail Sales						
Hotels, Motels, Other Lodging Places(1)	Mar	$5,513	million	2.9	-3.4	-1.9
Eating and Drinking Places(2)	Apr	$15,696	million	0.5	3.9	2.6
Gasoline Service Stations(2)	Apr	$10,403	million	-2.8	5.5	7.5
Commercial Lodging Demand						
Hotel/Motel Occupancy Rates(3)	Mar	59.8	percent	-0.1	-3.9	-5.3
Real Demand for Commercial Lodging(4)	Mar	64.1	million	7.4	-3.6	-2.4
Airline Passenger Traffic (5)						
Domestic Revenue Passenger-Miles	Apr	27.2	billion	1.0	-2.0	-4.4
Int'l Revenue Passenger-Miles	Apr	7.7	billion	10.9	-11.1	-14.8
Highway Traffic Volume (6)						
Rural Arterial Passenger-Miles	Mar	43.3	billion	20.8	-0.6	-1.5
Rail Passenger Traffic (7)						
Amtrak Passenger-Miles	Mar	563.6	million	26.6	3.8	7.1
Travel Price Index (1982 - 84 = 100) (8)	Apr	144.0		-1.5	8.2	10.6
U.S. Resident Travel						
Total Person-trips(9)	Dec	93.6	million	-1.1	-13.7	1.1
Vacation Person-trips(9)	Dec	63.2	million	1.8	-19.1	0.6
Total Person-nights(10)	Dec	402.5	million	3.8	n/a	n/a
Vacation Person-nights(10)	Dec	322.3	million	8.1	n/a	n/a
Visitor Volume at National Park Service Areas (11)						
Recreation Visits	Mar	14,676,072		33.0	-1.5	0.2
Overnight Stays	Mar	687,885		42.5	-2.0	1.4
Foreign Arrivals to the U.S.						
From Overseas(12)	Nov	N/A				
From Canada(13)	Mar	1,662,153		67.4	12.1	6.3
From Mexico(12)	Nov	N/A				
U.S. Citizen Departures						
To Overseas(12)	Dec	1,262,000		18.0	3.6	8.0
To Canada(13)	Mar	593,805		26.5	5.1	1.4
Domestic Demand for Gasoline						
Barrels/Day(14)	Mar	7,016	thousands	309.0	-4.2	-2.7

(1) Source: Smith Travel Research, seasonally adjusted. (2) Preliminary; revised monthly. Source: Bureau of the Census. (3) Source: Smith Travel Research, seasonally adjusted, 1988 and 1987 data have been revised. (4) Smith Travel Research, unadjusted room nights sold. (5) Preliminary; U.S. scheduled service air carriers. Source: Air Transport Association. (6) Preliminary; revised monthly. Source: Federal Highway Administration. (7) Source: National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak). (8) Source: U.S. Travel Data Center and Bureau of Labor Statistics. (9) Source: U.S. Travel Data Center. (10) U.S. Travel Data Center. Data is not comparable to earlier published numbers due to revised methodology. (11) Preliminary; unadjusted for differences in reporting units. Source: National Park Service. (12) Source: U.S. Travel and Tourism Administration. Mexican data reflect 194 arrivals only. (13) Statistics Canada. (14) Preliminary; Source: U.S. Department of Energy.

US Travel Data Center

Two Lafayette Centre
1133 21st Street, NW
Washington, D.C.
20036
(202) 293-1040

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
FIRST CLASS
PERMIT NO. 8523
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Jeanne Ling
Congressional Information
Service
4520 East-West Hwy., Ste. 800
Bethesda, MD 20814

May 1991

TRAVEL PRINTOUT

Research News for the U.S. Travel Industry